

REPORT ON INFORMATION COLLECTED CONCERNING APPLICANT

Under section 60835 of title 2 of the California Code of Regulations, the Bureau of State Audits is responsible for collecting information concerning applicants for the Citizens Redistricting Commission that is needed by the Applicant Review Panel to perform its responsibilities. This is a report by Bureau staff in compliance with that responsibility.

Name of Applicant: Byrd A. Lochtie.

Information: In two of the essay answers on her supplemental application, Applicant mentioned her experience serving as a member of the Eureka City Schools Board of Trustees. Bureau staff asked Applicant to provide more information about this experience. Applicant responded that she was elected to the Board in 1980 and served until 1988. This was a non-partisan position and the school district had about 8,000 students at the time. Staff asked applicant about the data analysis she said she performed while on the Board. Applicant explained that declining enrolment in schools in the North Coast area was one of the Board's major concerns. She reviewed projected population increases and decreases in various places, held public forums, and compiled information that was used to make decisions about resource allocation. Using her analysis, the Board closed down 2 schools.

Staff asked Applicant about her consulting business. Applicant answered that her consulting business provides services focused on "teaching people how to be good nonprofit board members." Her clients include the Humboldt Area Foundation, Boys & Girls Club, the Girl Scouts, local chambers of commerce, and environmental groups such as the North Coast Environmental Center. The Humboldt Area Foundation (which describes itself as a non-partisan umbrella organization for community giving) provides grants to some of the non profit organizations to which Applicant provides consulting services. Regarding lobbying and advocacy, Applicant said some of her clients, such as the North Coast Environmental Center, lobby for legislative changes, but she does not lobby or advocate on behalf of any client.

In her third essay answer on her supplemental application regarding appreciation for California's diverse demographics and geography, and in the "Activities" section of the application, Applicant mentioned her association with the League of Women Voters of Humboldt County and her service on its governing board. Staff asked Applicant about her responsibilities as a board member and about the nature of the political contacts she has made in the course of her activities with the League. Applicant responded that she conducts forums and moderates debates among candidates vying for state legislative seats or elected positions at the city and

county level. Some forums focus on local ballot issues, such as zoning. In her role as moderator, she is required to uphold strict norms of impartiality and non-partisanship. She does not have contact with political candidates outside of this context.

Also in her third essay answer on her supplemental application regarding appreciation for California's diverse demographics and geography, Applicant mentioned her service on the Board of Directors of an organization called "Latino-Net." Staff asked Applicant about this organization. Applicant described it as a coalition of about 50 agencies that work in critical service areas including health care, social services, children services, and education. Latino Net helps the Spanish-speaking community, and other needy communities, to gain access to these services. Applicant believes that without the help of Latino Net, these communities would not be aware of, or would not take advantage of, the services or opportunities available to them.

Staff asked Applicant about two of the lesser known organizations to which she has made donations: Mending Kids International and Samuel May House. Applicant said Mending Kids is a charity that brings children from various parts of the world to the United States for medical treatment. Samuel May House is a museum located at the Kentucky home of Applicant's great grandfather. It is dedicated to preserving historical documents.

Staff asked Applicant about the basis for her determination that she has a bona fide relationship with many of her family members. Applicant stated that she has loaned money to each of the family members, although some of the loans now have been repaid.

Bureau staff contacted Dr. Sharolyn L. Hutton, the author of one of Applicant's letters of recommendation, to confirm the information provided in the letter and receive any additional information that may be relevant. Dr. Hutton confirmed the information in the letter and added that she has known Applicant for about 5 years. As President of the League of Women Voters of Humboldt County, Dr. Hutton said she has observed Applicant conducting forums for the League as well as for the Humboldt County Human Rights Commission. Her observations were that Applicant "makes sure that all voices are heard." Dr. Hutton described Applicant as being "fair-minded and a great believer in civil discourse." She said Applicant has a sound understanding of election systems and processes and Dr. Hutton credited Applicant with helping the Bear River Tribal Council overcome internal strife by setting up an election system that was consistent with its constitution and acceptable to all.

Recommendation: None.

Name and title of person submitting response: Steven Benito Russo, Chief of Investigations

Report Date: September 14, 2010